

REQUIRED ACTION to Turn Around Low-Achieving Schools

2011.01.14

A PROCESS, A PLAN, AND A PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

REQUIRED ACTION was an essential piece of SB 6696, the Washington State Legislature's 2010 education reform package.

Required Action is designed to address our persistently lowest-achieving schools, those with low student math and reading test scores (and low graduation rates for high schools) and with inadequate improvement. The districts of some of these schools will be recommended for Required Action and will receive funds targeted to make lasting gains in student achievement.



The **Required Action Framework** (RCW 28A.657):

- Supports schools with federal funds beginning in 2011 and for two years thereafter to implement a school improvement model.
- Districts select one of four federal intervention models and create a local plan for improvement, with input from all stakeholders.
- Allows for the **opening of any collective bargaining agreement** approved after June 10, 2010 (when necessary to meet the requirements of the academic performance audit).
- Allows for a partnership between the state and local districts to help schools continue to improve through data-driven and research-based reforms designed to:
 1. Increase achievement for all students.
 2. Close the achievement gap.
 3. Reduce the dropout rate.

Additional Features of SB 6696 on Accountability

1. Ongoing collaboration with the Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee to close the achievement gap.
2. Annual recognition of schools for exemplary performance by the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).
3. A joint-select committee on education accountability (formed no earlier than May 2012) will explore further potential steps to address schools that fail to improve through Required Action.

2010-2011 Timeline

1. December 2010: OSPI identifies the persistently lowest-achieving schools and notifies the districts that they will be recommended as Required Action District (RADs).
2. January 2011: SBE designates RADs
3. January through February 2011: OSPI conducts performance audits. RADs prepare plans to implement one of four federal intervention models.
4. March 2011: OSPI reviews RADs' plans. SBE approves RADs' plans and OSPI awards grants

REQUIRED ACTION: A FIVE STEP PROCESS

STEP 1: DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION

Using federal criteria, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will identify the bottom five percent of the lowest-achieving Title I and Title I eligible schools and their districts. In 2011, OSPI will recommend districts with the lowest-achieving schools that did not volunteer for School Improvement Grants in 2010. SBE will designate one or more districts as [Required Action Districts](#). These districts may receive federal grants for up to \$2 million per school per year for three years.

STEP 2: ACADEMIC AUDIT

- ✓ SBE directs [OSPI](#) to conduct an academic performance audit of [Required Action Districts](#).
- ✓ The audit, conducted by third party experts in the field, will examine factors such as:
 - Student demographics and mobility patterns.
 - Effective school leadership, strategic allocation of resources, clear and shared focus on student learning, high standards and expectations for all students, and a high level of collaboration and communication.
 - Aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessments to state standards.
 - Focused professional development.
 - Unique circumstances or characteristics of the school district.
- ✓ [OSPI](#) communicates audit findings to SBE and the [Required Action Districts](#) and their communities.

STEP 3: PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Based on the audit findings, the [local board](#) develops a Required Action Plan in collaboration with staff and the community. If necessary, the district must reopen the collective bargaining agreement to address the audit's findings. The Required Action Plan must also include detailed information on the necessary budget for improvement, the resources needed, and a metric for the measurement of desired outcomes. The Required Action plan must use one of the following four federal intervention models (state/local models may be used in subsequent years):

- Turnaround: Replace principal and 50% of staff.
- Restart: Open the school under a third party education management organization.
- Closure: Send students to higher-achieving schools in the district.
- Transformation: Replace principal, reform instructional environment, develop teacher and school leader effectiveness, increase community engagement, and extend learning time.

STEP 4: PLAN APPROVAL & IMPLEMENTATION

- ✓ [OSPI](#) reviews the Required Action Plan, and SBE approves the Required Action Plan and ensures that [the district](#) has sufficient resources and authority for implementation. In certain cases, mediation and, if necessary, a Superior Court decision (with a specified timeline) may be required in an impasse. The district can also appeal the SBE ruling to a Required Action Review Panel.
- ✓ The [District](#) implements the Required Action Plan and has three years to make significant progress based on approved plan metrics.
- ✓ Federal funds will be provided for plan implementation.
- ✓ [OSPI](#) continues to provide assistance as needed.

STEP 5: REVIEW & NOTIFICATION

- ✓ During the third year, [OSPI](#) notifies SBE of a district's Required Action progress and determines whether a [district](#) has demonstrated sufficient improvement.
- ✓ SBE notifies a [district](#) that it is no longer a Required Action District or that insufficient progress has been made and a new Required Action Plan is needed.

